



ELECTION FOCUS 2008



September 18, 2008

No. 15

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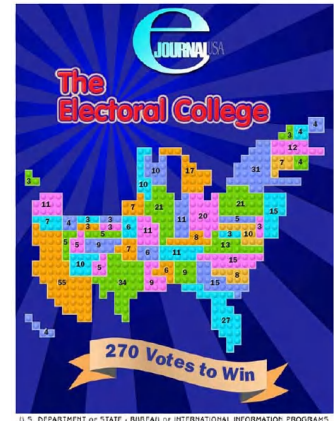


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Latest News

THE ELECTORAL COLLEGE – Sept. 2008

What is the Electoral College? How does the Electoral College elect the president? For which races is the Electoral College used? We hope that this issue of eJournal USA will improve your understanding of the historical reasons for the Electoral College system and how it functions.



Presidential Hopeful John McCain Answers Science Policy Queries -

09/17/2008 If elected president of the United States in November, John McCain says he will support federal funding for embryonic stem cell research, implement policies to reduce U.S. greenhouse gas emissions to 60 percent below 1990 levels by 2050 and reform math and science education in schools. Democratic nominee Barack Obama responded to the same questions in August.

See ["Obama Answers Science Questions Posed to Presidential Candidates."](#)

Presidential Contest Remains Close in Battleground States - 09/17/2008

Many states favor Republican John McCain or Democrat Barack Obama so strongly that there is little doubt which candidates will win those states' Electoral College votes. This means the outcome of the presidential race will depend on who wins the battleground states, Republican pollster Neil Newhouse and Democratic pollster Stanley Greenberg reminded journalists at the State Department's Foreign Press Center Sept. 16.

Senior Citizens Most Reliable Group of U.S. Voters - 09/17/2008

U.S. presidential nominees Barack Obama and John McCain are vying for the vote of senior citizens, who political analysts tell America.gov are the most reliable group to vote in American elections. Curtis Gans, director of the nonpartisan Center for the Study of the American Electorate at American University in Washington, said seniors vote at a rate of about 60 percent more than young people and about 10 percentage points higher than the national average.

Next President Could Shape US Judiciary More than Predecessors - 09/11/2008

Thanks to retirements and the creation of new judgeships, a President Obama or President McCain will be in a much better position than President Bush was to shift the balance of Republican and Democratic appointees in the federal court system, analysts at Washington's Brookings Institute say.

Parties Recruit More Women to Vote Than to Run - 09/11/2008

Women politicians were highly visible at political party conventions, but still are few in number compared to men in elected office. But women's political action committees are changing that: By raising funds for women candidates and lending a hand in their campaigns, they are helping more women get elected.

Presidential Race Statistical Tie in Swing State Florida - 09/10/2008

In Florida, with less than two months left to campaign and Republican John McCain and Democrat Barack Obama seemingly tied, voting technology still might be a bigger concern for officials than the race itself. The state that brought the term "hanging chad" into common use is eager to avoid the problem ...

Obama, McCain Advisers Discuss Nominees' Views on Latin America - 09/09/2008

Advisers to Democrat Barack Obama and Republican John McCain outline the two presidential candidates' differences on U.S. policies in the Western Hemisphere. The advisers say one major difference is the candidates' views on a pending U.S. free-trade pact with Colombia, with McCain favoring the agreement ...

Daily updated information is available at a special **U.S. Elections** page at:
<http://usplitics.america.gov/uspolitics/elections/>

Blogs at America.gov **CAMPAIGN TRAIL TALK**



<http://blogs.america.gov/campaign/>

Provides running commentary and information on the 2008 elections in the United States. This blog keeps readers up to date on news, rumors and political chatter surrounding thousands of political races. Readers may ask questions about the electoral process, post their comments about the candidates, and generally guide the discussion.

Michelle Austein keeps you up to date on the candidates, issues and quirky happenings in the 2008 campaign, the third national election cycle she's covered. [Full Biography](#)

From the blog:

[Bob Barr wants McCain and Obama off Texas ballot](#) — 17 September 2008

[Smart enough to vote? Reader suggests qualifying U.S. voters](#) — 16 September 2008

[Presidential candidates paying close attention to financial crisis](#) — 15 September 2008

[McCain and Obama talk about the importance of service](#) — 12 September 2008

[Photos from the Republican National Convention](#) — 12 September 2008

[Photos from the Democratic National Convention](#) — 12 September 2008

[Presidential candidates commemorate September 11 attacks](#) - 11 September 2008

[Obama favored in international polls](#) - 10 September 2008

[Good news for John McCain](#) - 9 September 2008

POLLS

McCain Tops Obama In 4 National Polls, Tied In 5th Sen. John McCain leads Sen. Barack Obama in four of five national polls out this morning, with his advantage ranging from a tie (McClatchy/Ipsos) to five points (the Battleground poll).

A George Washington University Battleground poll of 1,000 likely voters taken September 7-11 shows McCain leading Obama 46%-40% when asked at the beginning of the survey and not given the candidates names. Given the names of the candidates, plus those of Ralph Nader (I) and Bob Barr (L), later in the survey, 49% said they would vote for McCain-Palin, 44% for Obama-Biden. An [American Research Group](#) poll of 1,200 likely voters taken September 12-15 shows McCain leading Obama 48%-45%. The [Gallup](#) daily presidential tracking poll of 2,800 registered voters taken September 13-15 shows McCain leading Obama 47%-46%. McCain had led Obama 47%-45% the three previous days. The [Rasmussen Reports](#) automated daily presidential tracking poll for September 16 shows McCain leading Obama 47%-46%.

Obama Has Wide Lead In New York A [Rasmussen Reports](#) automated poll of 500 likely New York State voters taken September 15 shows Obama leading McCain 55%-42%, down from a 52%-32% lead in August but well ahead of the Siena poll out earlier this week which showed Obama up just 46%-41%.

McCain Up 4 In Ohio A [Public Policy Polling](#) (D) survey of 1,077 likely Ohio voters taken September 13-14 shows McCain leading Obama 48%-44%. The race was tied in PPP's August Ohio survey.

CAMPAIGN 2008



[Council on Foreign Relations – Issue Trackers](#)

Issue Trackers provide summaries of presidential candidates' positions on an array of foreign policy issues facing the United States.

[The Candidates on Homeland Security](#) - Council on Foreign Relations, September 12, 2008

Homeland security is likely to generate considerable discussion in the 2008 presidential race on topics such as the USA Patriot Act, border fences, and FEMA reforms after Hurricane Katrina.

[The Candidates on Iraq](#) - Council on Foreign Relations, September 12, 2008

The war in Iraq has remained a top concern of American voters in the 2008 presidential campaign season. Candidates are divided between supporting the president's strategy to surge more troops into central Iraq versus establishing a timetable to eventually pull out U.S. forces, with some residual units left in the region.

[The Candidates on Climate Change](#) - Council on Foreign Relations, September 11, 2008

Democratic presidential candidates have much more readily embraced plans for federally mandated action to curb carbon emissions, and combat climate change.

[The Candidates on Energy Policy](#) - Council on Foreign Relations, September 11, 2008

Alternative energy policy—ranging from boosting ethanol supplies to conservation—has emerged as a crucial issue for candidates in the 2008 presidential campaign.

[Palin Comparison: Half of Campaign Storylines Revolve around GOP VP.](#) By Mark Jurkowitz, Project for Excellence in Journalism, September 16, 2008

Barack Obama may have generated more coverage, but as has been the case ever since her selection on Aug. 29, Sarah Palin still drove the media narrative last week.

[Revisiting the Mommy Wars After Palin: Politics, Gender and Parenthood](#) - By Rich Morin and Paul Taylor, Pew Research Center, September 15, 2008

Who makes better candidates -- moms or dads? And more broadly, what impact do both the gender and parenting status of candidates have on their chances to win an election?

[Republicans Cry Foul Over Media Coverage of Palin](#) – Gallup, September 15, 2008

The pundit-fueled firestorm around media coverage of John McCain's running mate Sarah Palin is evident in Americans' highly mixed views on the subject.

[JohnMcCain.com v. BarackObama.com : Engagement and Participation.](#) Project for Excellence in Journalism. September 15, 2008.

With roughly seven weeks left until Election Day, how are the campaigns using the Web? How developed are their Web campaigns? Which candidate has the edge online, and how so?

[CONVENTION COMPARISONS](#) – By Michael Baudinet. The Center for Politics, September 11, 2008

Before launching into a comparison of the actual conventions, let's first take a look at the venues the national committees chose for their week-long celebrations of party pride.

[OBAMA'S NEW LOOK AT THE MAP](#) – By Rhodes Cook. The Center for Politics, September 11, 2008

This is the time of the presidential campaign for "game-changing" moments, whether it is a huge outdoor acceptance speech in the shadow of the Rocky Mountains or the vice presidential selection of a largely unknown young female governor from Alaska.

[The Bounce Effect](#) - By Andrew Kohut. Pew Research Center, September 11, 2008

The post-convention polls are in and they show John McCain getting quite a bounce from his convention. He not only wiped out the lift in the polls that Barack Obama got from his convention, but he is now polling better than he has at any point this year in most surveys.

The Experiment: Do Mommies or Daddies Make Better Candidates?

It depends on whether you are a Republican or Democrat

Percent that were "very likely" to vote for...

	ANN WITH CHILDREN Sample 1	ANN WITHOUT CHILDREN Sample 2	ANDREW WITH CHILDREN Sample 3	ANDREW WITHOUT CHILDREN Sample 4
TOTAL	25%	25%	27%	22%
Republican	21	28	31	19
Democrat	33	27	24	28

ELECTION CALENDAR

September 26, 2008 - First Presidential debate | **October 2, 2008** - Vice Presidential debate

October 10, 2008 - Second Presidential debate | **October 15, 2008** - Final Presidential debate

November 4, 2008 - Election Day

ARTICLE ALERT

RHETORICAL QUESTIONS. *James Fallows. Atlantic*, September 2008, Vol. 302, No. 2, pp. 34-52.

Who will win the presidential debates? What does each candidate's use of words say about how he would govern as president? Can Obama's rhetorical skills lift him to the heights of Lincoln, FDR, and Reagan—or will his speechmaking do him in? After watching all 47 (!) of the primary season's debates, our correspondent has the answers—and some harsh criticism for the moderators. [FULL TEXT](#)

RECONCILABLE DIFFERENCES. *Ronald Brownstein. Atlantic*, September 2008, Vol.302, No.2, pp. 54-62.

Obama and McCain both say they want to usher in a new, less divisive brand of politics. Which of them has the better chance? Is bipartisanship still possible? [FULL TEXT](#)

THE FRONT-RUNNER'S FALL. *Joshua Green. Atlantic*, September 2008, Vol.302, No.2, pp. 64-74.

Hillary Clinton's campaign was undone by a clash of personalities more toxic than anyone imagined. E-mails and memos—published here for the first time—reveal the backstabbing and conflicting strategies that produced an epic meltdown. [FULL TEXT](#)

FROM SENECA FALLS TO ... SARAH PALIN? *Julia Baird. Newsweek*, September 22, 2008

Odd, yes, but there we are. Still, history suggests issues of policy will ultimately trump the politics of identity. [FULL TEXT](#)

AN APOSTLE OF ALASKA. *Jeffrey Bartholet. Newsweek*, September 15, 2008

We know the outlines—the moose-hunting mom who juggles BlackBerrys and kids. But what does she believe? The real Sarah Palin. [FULL TEXT](#)

THE CANDIDATES STUMP FOR NATIONAL SERVICE. *Richard Stengel. Time*. Vol. 172 No. 12, September 12, 2008

President will surely take steps to help more Americans serve. But they don't have to wait that long to get started [FULL TEXT](#)

Plus - [Google News](#) as well as [Yahoo News](#) on **Elections** updated continuously

UPCOMING EVENTS



Discussion on U.S. Elections:

September 30, 2008 at 17:30

University Library, Klariská 5, Bratislava

The discussion will be moderated by **Keith Hughes**,
Information Officer/Spokesperson at the U.S. Embassy



R.S.V.P. – E-mail: arc_brat@state.gov or jorikovam@state.gov by September 26, 2008

American Reference Center, Public Affairs Section, U.S. Embassy
P.O. Box 309, 814 99 Bratislava, Slovakia
Tel: +421-2-59223272; Fax: +421-2-54418862
<http://slovakia.usembassy.gov/arc.html>; holotnakovap@state.gov